THE BLOOMFIELD CITIZEN.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1887.

Temperance Legislation. The members of the Legislature are about to meet each other at Trenton. They will also meet the liquor question. This last meeting is looked forward to with pleasure by some and with aversion by others. It has been brought forward by its friends and avoided and dodged by its enemies this long time, but now at last it has planted itself squarely in the path of legislation, and must be met. All sorts of politicians seem to realize this, and are sullenly or gladly ranging themselves on the one side or the other-for free rum or against it. It promises to be a sad season for the amphibious statesman.

Bloomfield has the honor and the responsibility of furnishing a member of the Legislature. He has his own views on the subject of the liquor traffic, and may be depended upon to do good work in the cause of check ing and bringing funder control its manifold evils; but his influence will be increased tenfold at Trenton if the people of his district are found solid and active behind him. A leader is strong in proportion to the number, strength and activity of his followers. In Mr. McGowan the First Assembly District has an exceptionally able representative. The people may now congratulate themselves, that what appeared untoward accidents at the time, prevented him from accepting the nomination before, and that he has been reserved for this critical period. THE CITIZEN intends that ac tive and continuous support shall be given him, so far as it has the power to create it. And to that end it will endeavor to educate its readers in the matter of liquor legislation, by pub lishing and commenting upon the experiments in other States.

In another column will be found copy of the Dow Law of Ohio, which will be followed by the speeches and letters of distinguished men on the subject involved, and accounts of the practical working of liquor legisla-

Let it not be supposed that this is a needless work, for argument without experiment and observation is as useless, misleading and mischievous in the domain of legislation as in that of natural science. Closet philosophers are out of place in both, when an advance is to be made. Natural science stood still for centuries, while schoolmen bandied words and built theories on wind; but when the observer and the experimenter took the field, then came progress and solid results. Successful legislation must be founded on hard facts and not on airy fancies.

The visionary enthusiast serves a most useful purpose in exciting interest and compelling attention, but is worse than useless in the council chamber. He is satisfied with nothing short of the ideal and this in our way ward world is never to be attained. Even the divinely-inspired law-maker, Moses, was compelled to mould his precepts to suit the hardness of the hearts of the people. He well knew what ideally perfect conduct was, but he knew better than to command it by municipal law. If Moses, who had the standard of perfect conduct direct from the Almighty, ordained laws in a measure suited to the temper of the times, and falling far short of that standard, how much more are we, in certain cases, warranted in following his example, seeing that in these same cases our best men do not agree in what would be the ideally perfect con-

Not what he would like to do, but what he can do, that from day to day will make towards what he would like to do, is the problem which is ever present with the practical statesman. To the solution of this tremendous, ever pressing question, he devotes his days and nights-ever seeking the ideal-never reaching it; sometimes even temporarily going from it, that in the end he more nearly attain it. The doctrinaire dreams out a to him perfect system of laws, within the four walls of his study, but it is shattered into fragments, like a sword of glass, when it comes into contact with the contending passions of the outside world.

Efficient legislation for New Jersey must be founded on the experience gathered from the practical experiments of other States, and the observed present state of things in our own State. We propose to set these matters before our readers so that, laying aside pet theories and preconceived opinions, they may strengthen the hands of our representative in securing some present practical relief from the evil that threatens us with destruction.

It is not likely that we shall all agree upon the details of the method to be made use of; but any method attainable is better than no method at all. It will be a step in advance to do something, anything giving visible relief. And, having obtained foothold, we can take breath and consult about what next.

The people at large are looking to the Republican Party for help in the present emergency. They count upon it. They will be patient regarding results if they see the machinery started, intended to bring them about. They will forgive mistakes and defeats, but indifference will be visited with their sore displeasure. If the Republican leaders will grapple with the liquor question, the Prohibitionists will soon bave no more following in this State than so many howling der-

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